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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, FR

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Secretary Rice to Europe -
CIA Allegations
PARIS - Wednesday, December 07, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Secretary Rice to Europe - CIA Allegations

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Secretary Rice's visit to Europe and her handling of
allegations about the CIA is today's front-page story in left-
of-center Liberation and a major story in several outlets.
Liberation, the most critical by far, headlines: "The Trial
Against the CIA: Secret Flights, Abductions, Torture," and
continues: "During her European tour, Secretary Rice justifies

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the anti-terrorist methods of the U.S. secret service."

Inside, the two-page report is headlined: "Condoleezza Rice Under Questioning" and the editorial is entitled "Black Hole." Le Figaro reports "Condoleezza Rice Acknowledges That the CIA made 'a Mistake'."

Left-of-center Le Monde titles its story: "'Secret Prisons' Said to Have Been Closed Before Rice's Arrival." Le Parisien titles its report: "CIA Secret Prisons Hamper Rice." France Inter radio commentary by Bernard Guetta is titled "Torture Is Back." (See Part C)

Le Figaro reports on its front page: "The U.S. Military is establishing troops in Romania." The "historic" agreement signed in Bucharest during Secretary Rice's visit is noted as "a first in Eastern Europe and the result of a new orientation by the Bush administration of troop re-deployment to meet new terrorist threats." Le Figaro also reports on the "lack of agreement" in Slovenia between the Europeans, the Americans and the Russians during the OSCE summit. Nicolas Burns is quoted: "We will not sell short our principles for a piece of paper."

Reports on the latest kidnappings in Iraq include reports about the "mystery" surrounding the background of Bernard Planche, the Frenchman abducted last week, and his affiliation to an NGO financed by USAID. France Soir reports about the "controversy" over Planche, "who was warned by the French Embassy but remained in Iraq despite the dangers." and notes that little was known about Planche or his activities.

All outlets report on the C130 that crashed in Teheran. Most commentators note: "Because of the economic restrictions on Iran set by Washington, the U.S.-made C130s cannot be repaired."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Secretary Rice to Europe - CIA Allegations

"Torture Is Back"

Bernard Guetta on government-run France Inter radio (12/07): "Despite her numerous statements, Secretary Rice, rather than being reassuring, is in fact achieving the opposite. She has refused to comment on the allegations made against the CIA, and opted instead to call on European governments and their publics to 'decide whether they, with the U.S., want to fight against terrorism.' When she admits to 'errors' as she did in Berlin, she is talking more about having made errors about individuals, rather than about fundamental political, legal and moral errors in the methods used. The only denial made to

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the allegations raised by the U.S. press has been about the use of torture. The U.S. President must not be aware of what countries the U.S. is sending prisoners to, or what their practices are. The presidential denial is not credible and obviously the U.S., far from 'adapting' to national and international laws which it obviously considers obsolete, is staying on the same course, that of secret prisons and renditions to allied countries known to use torture. Meanwhile, the EU is kindly being asked to put a damper on its concerns. Actively or passively, democracies are forgetting what makes up their strength: the rule of law, habeas corpus and all the principles derived thereon."

"The Black Hole"

Patrick Sabatier in left-of-center Liberation (12/07): "Were European governments unaware that the CIA was 'outsourcing' torture of its prisoners in foreign secret prisons? If they were, they should draw the conclusions from such contempt on behalf of the U.S. towards its allies. But were they not rather in cahoots with the U.S., as Secretary Rice clearly indicated? In that case publics should draw the conclusions from their governments' contempt for the rule of law. Either way the situation is serious. We cannot let this gangrene continue to spread. George Bush and his gang think that in the fight against terror all is permitted, even when the rule of law becomes part of the collateral damage. Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and the CIA phantom detainees and secret prisons are part of that same legal black hole dug by the Bush administration and into which it is dragging its allies."

"'Secret Prisons' Said to Have Been Closed Before Rice's Arrival"

Corine Lesnes in left-of-center Le Monde (12/07): "According to an ABC report, two secret prisons opened by the CIA in Eastern Europe were closed a month ago when the first allegations began. These allegations were made as Secretary Rice was starting on her European tour. According to ABC, American officials have made every effort to take all 'phantom' detainees out of Europe before her arrival there. In Washington, Secretary Rice read a statement defending the practice of renditions as a 'vital tool to combat transnational terrorism.' Secretary Rice also stated that the U.S. did not use airports or airspace to move detainees to a destination where they might be tortured. She did not comment on secret prisons but said 'information had helped prevent terrorist acts in the U.S. and Europe.' The State Department did not elaborate on what European country might have benefited from such information. For the Bush administration, Europe's grumbling against these U.S. practices is somewhat

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`hypocritical.' According to well-informed sources, a debate took place (in Washington) about adopting a stance of full transparency, considering the large number of CIA flights mentioned, and which Washington considered highly exaggerated. In the end, the administration chose to remain silent and to bounce the ball back into the court of its European partners: did they want all their anti-terrorist activities out in the open?"

"Secret Prisons Hamper Rice"

Thomas Cantaloube in right-of-center Le Parisien (12/07):

"Rice's European tour is more like an obstacle course than a friendly diplomatic tour. At every stop she has to answer the same questions about the CIA. To each question she gives the same perfectly calibrated answer: 'the U.S. government does not approve and does not authorize torture.' The problem with her line of defense, is that the Bush administration has re-defined the definition of torture. Rice's phrase that 'the U.S. has always respected the sovereignty of other nations' tends to indicate that European nations were aware. In short, she is putting the ball back in the court of the same nations which are asking for answers."

"Rice Concedes to an 'Error' By CIA"

Pierre Bocev in right-of-center Le Figaro (12/07): "In Berlin, Rice defended the intelligence agency and refused to say more about secret flights. She avoided all the difficult questions, at least in public. even if she conceded that 'an error' may have been made about a German citizen." STAPLETON

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